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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [MI](#)

SUBJECT: REACTION - WESTERN AID, LILONGWE

1. "Africa: But Where is the Money?"

2. The independent weekly, "The Sunday Times" of March 13, 2005, featured an opinion item "Africa: But Where is the Money?" written by Sunjay Suri, Inter Press Service News Agency's London correspondent. Suri argues that past aid packages rich nations gave to Africa were frustrated in one way or another. He wonders if the same fate doesn't await the new 'Commission for Africa' British aid package. Excerpts follow:

3. "The United States has pointedly stayed away from recent British proposals including the International Finance Facility (IFF) that wants government to raise money from the market and borrow from their own future lending to increase aid.

The United States has set up the Millennium Challenge Account to provide aid grants - in exchange for its requirements to meet democratic standards and a commitment to a 'war on terror'. And the United States is not about to increase its aid budget on the recommendations of a British commission.

The United States has also opposed plans for any automatic and across-the-board cancellation of debt. British moves for such debt cancellation were rebuffed last month at a meeting of finance ministers of the G7.

.The 400-page report of the commission titled 'Our Common Interest' does more than call for more aid and debt cancellation.

.The Commission for Africa has generated enthusiasm in Britain and in African countries but not beyond where it could really matter."

Gilmour